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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Former State Employee Receives Jail Term for Welfare Fraud

(Phoenix, Ariz. – Feb. 20, 2008) Attorney General Terry Goddard today announced that Tammy J. Jordan, 46, of Phoenix, was sentenced yesterday to six months in Maricopa County Jail and four years probation for defrauding the Arizona Department of Economic Security (DES). She also was ordered to pay restitution of \$2,490 and perform 150 hours of community service. In January, Jordan pleaded guilty to one count of theft, a class 4 felony.

Jordan was a DES program service evaluator whose job included reviewing welfare applications with applicants to determine if they qualified for public assistance benefits. She would input that information into the DES computer system, along with the benefits the applicant was to receive each month. She would also see that electronic benefit transfer (EBT) cards (similar to debit cards) were sent to qualifying welfare applicants.

Jordan was contacted by a welfare recipient who had found a job and was no longer eligible to receive public assistance. Instead of closing the case, Jordan entered a change of address for that recipient into the computer system. The new address was one to which Jordan had access.

Jordan added cash assistance and food stamp benefits to the account for future months. She also had a replacement EBT card delivered to the new address. Jordan used the replacement card 25 times to withdraw food stamp and cash assistance benefits at various stores, banks and ATM machines. DES discovered the fraud and removed the balance of funds remaining on the EBT card account.

Jordan's conviction was the result of a joint investigation by the Attorney General's Office and the Department of Economic Security Internal Affairs office. Assistant Attorney General Chris Wilson prosecuted this case.

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